

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2297

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 1789

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS TO OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED

EO 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PO, PFOR, EAID

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES ON US-
PORTUGUESE RELATIONS

1. SPENT APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS WITH PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES LAST NIGHT, MARCH 28. SENATOR BROOKE PRESENT FOR FIRST HALF OF CONVERSATION.

2. FIRST PART OF DISCUSSION WITH BROOKE FOCUSSED ON AID PROGRAM. AS USUAL, PM SHOWED GREAT INTEREST, TOOK NOTES AND ASKED DETAILED QUESTIONS. INDICATED CLEARLY THAT HE WANTS TO MOVE AHEAD WITH AID PROPOSAL AND WILL LET ME KNOW MONDAY WHO WILL BE OVERALL COORDINATOR IN NEW GOP.

3. BROOKE SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO HIS INTEREST IN AID, HE HAD COME TO PORTUGAL TO MAKE HIS OWN EVALUATION OF OVERALL SITUATION. IN PARTICULAR HE WAS INTERESTED IN WHAT THE CHANGES IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT MIGHT IMPLY FOR RELATIONS WITH NATO. SAID HE DID NOT APPROACH PORTUGAL WITH ANY PRECONCEPTIONS, AND HOPED GOP WOULD NOT APPROACH U.S. WITH PRECONCEPTIONS. GONCALVES, NOT SURPRISINGLY, RESPONDED WITH CRITICISM OF INTERNATIONAL PRESS COVERAGE OF PORTUGAL. SAID SUCH COVERAGE WAS PREJUDICING GOOD RELATIONS WHICH PORTUGAL WISHES TO MAINTAIN WITH WEST. AFTER ALL, USG HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES WHOSE INTERNAL SYSTEMS DIFFERENT THAN OURS, INCLUDING
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SOVIET UNION. WHY, THEN, SHOULD WE BECOME CONCERNED WITH

INTERNAL CHANGES IN PORTUGAL? AS LONG AS GOP MAINTAINS ITS COMMITMENTS, WHY CAN'T IT HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S. EVEN THOUGH IT IS MAKING INTERNAL CHANGES. AS FAR AS NATO IS CONCERNED, GOP HAD PUBLICLY REAFFIRMED ITS COMMITMENT AND HAD NO INTENTION OF LEAVING NATO.

4. BROOKE RESPONDED THAT THE LACK OF DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OFTEN LED TO EXAGGERATED SPECULATION IN THE PRESS. ONE REASON FOR HIS TRIP WAS TO ENABLE HIM TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION HERE TO HIS COLLEAGUES IN CONGRESS. PM COULD UNDERSTAND, HE SAID, HOW PEOPLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES WITHOUT A DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL SITUATION COULD WONDER ABOUT MEANING OF DRAMATIC CHANGES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN PORTUGAL. THIS IS A NORMAL CONCERN.

5. PM REPLIED SAYING HE COULD APPRECIATE QUESTIONS AND SPECULATION BASED ON A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING; WHAT HE COULD NOT COMPREHEND IS DELIBERATE AND PROVOCATIVE LIES BEING WRITTEN ABOUT PORTUGAL. SAID JUST YESTERDAY IN BROADCAST TO CANADA HE WAS ASKED IF IT NOT TRUE THAT COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERSHIP CARD REQUIRED TO CALL ON GOP MINISTERS. THIS KIND OF REPORTING IS VICIOUS.

6. BROOKE TOLD PM HE HAD ONLY ARRIVED "THIS MORNING," BUT FIRST THING HE SAW WAS HEADLINE IN LOCAL PAPER ACCUSING U.S. AMBASSADOR OF BEING CIA AGENT AND PLOTTING OVERTHROW OF GOP. WASN'T THIS EQUALLY BAD. HE HAD KNOWN U.S. AMBASSADOR FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, AND KNEW HE WAS NOT CIA EMPLOYEE. NOR HAD HE EVER BEEN IN CHILE. THIS SORT OF THING JUST CREATES DISTRUST BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES. GONCALVES SAID HE UNDERSTOOD, AND GOP HAD ISSUED COMMUNIQUE DEFENDING U.S. AMBASSADOR (LISBON 1763).

7. BROOKE SAID HE COULD APPRECIATE IDEALISM OF YOUNG PORTUGUESE OFFICERS WHO HAD FOUGHT IN AFRICA AND THEIR DESIRE TO BRING ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE. THIS WAS HIGHLY COMMENDABLE. BUT PM COULD ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IT TAKES TIME FOR U.S. TO COMPREHEND THE NATURE OF THE CHANGE. WE ASSUME THAT GOP DOES NOT WISH TO BE PULLED BY SOVIETS FROM ONE SIDE AND USG ON THE OTHER. HOWEVER, FACT THAT A NATO MEMBER HAS NOW REORGANIZED ITS GOVERNMENT IN A SHIFT TO THE LEFT, NATURALLY GIVES RISE TO DEEP AND GRAVE
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CONCERNS IN THE WEST. JUST AS HE EXPECTS US TO LIVE WITH AND UNDERSTAND GOP POSITION, GOP WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITH NATURAL CONCERNS OF ALLIES.

8. GONCALVES SAID PRESS SPECULATION AND COMMENT IS ONE THING, COMMENTS BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS ARE QUITE ANOTHER. PORTUGAL DOES NOT COMMENT ON A CHANGE IN U.S. ADMINISTRATIONS, NOR DOES IT EXPRESS PUBLICLY ITS CONCERNS ABOUT WHAT U.S. POLICIES

MIGHT BE IN THE REST OF THE WORLD. A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR, AND GOVERNMENTS MUST BE OBJECTIVE IN DEALING WITH EACH OTHER.

9. BROOKE ENDED BY SAYING HE OPPOSED COMMUNISM IN PORTUGAL BECAUSE HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT IN BEST INTEREST OF PORTUGUESE PEOPLE, BUT HE WANTED TO COMMEND GOP FOR BRINGING ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE. HE WAS STAUNCHLY OPPOSED TO INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES, BUT GOP ONCE AGAIN HAD TO UNDERSTAND THAT OUR CONCERNS WERE NORMAL.

10. PM THEN ASKED IF I WOULD STAY ALONE WITH HIM. HE BROUGHT OUT PRESS REPORT ON SPEECH I HAD DELIVERED MARCH 26 TO AMERICAN CLUB. (SPEECH WAS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE TO DEPARTMENT BY LISBON 1673). SAID HE HAD STUDIED SPEECH CAREFULLY AND IT CONTAINED MANY POSITIVE POINTS, WHICH HE THEN CITED. HE SAID HE ALSO UNDERSTOOD MY INTENT, BUT FACT WAS THAT I HAD COMMENTED ON INTERNAL PORTUGUESE AFFAIRS. I WAS VERY MUCH IN THE SPOTLIGHT AND SHOULD NOT COMMENT, EVEN FAVORABLY ON INTERNAL AFFAIRS.
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 1789

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11. I SAID THAT AS LONG AS WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THE CLIMATE BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES, I WANTED TO PROTEST VIGOROUSLY THE CONSTANT PRESS ATTACKS ON USG AND ON ME PERSONALLY. WHEN GONCALVES ASKED WHAT ARTICLES IN ADDITION TO THE A CAPITAL ARTICLE I WAS TALKING ABOUT, I FURNISHED HIM SEVERAL OTHER ARTICLES AND MENTIONED AN OFFICIAL AFM BROADCAST YESTERDAY MORNING ACCUSING THE CIA OF ATTEMPTING TO OVERTHROW PERUVIAN

GOVERNMENT. SAID I RECOGNIZED IMPORTANCE OF FREE PRESS, AND WAS NOT ADVOCATING CENSORSHIP BUT OTELO STATEMENT HAD BEEN TAKEN AS GREEN LIGHT FOR OPEN SEASON ON U.S. AMBASSADOR. I WAS FRANKLY "FED UP" WITH PRESS IRRESPONSIBILITY. GONCALVES SAID HE WOULD TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO DEAL WITH SITUATION.

12. PM THEN BROUGHT OUT NEWSPAPER CLIPPING CONTAINING EXCERPTS FROM SECRETARY'S STATEMENT ON PORTUGAL. I FURNISHED HIM WITH COMPLETE TEXT. HE READ IT CAREFULLY AND NOTED COMMENT ON COMMUNISTS HAVING MANY OF CHIEF PORTFOLIOS IN NEW CABINET, FACT THAT THIS RAISES QUESTION FOR U.S. IN RELATIONSHIP TO ITS NATO POLICY AND TO ITS POLICY WITH PORTUGAL AND IS A MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED WITH OUR ALLIES. WITH SOME FORCEFULNESS, GONCALVES SAID THIS IS A "DIRECT INTERFERENCE IN OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. WE CANNOT ACCEPT THIS KIND OF EXPRESSION FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE. WE DON'T MAKE STATEMENTS ON YOUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. IF WE ARE TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS, RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS HAS TO BE MUTUAL." HE ASKED THAT I COMMUNICATE HIS VIEWS DIRECTLY TO WASHINGTON.

13. I SAID I WOULD, BUT TOLD PM USG HAD TWO CONCERNS WHICH
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WERE LEGITIMATE: ONE WAS IN OUR OWN NETWORK OF SECURITY AND THE ROLE PORTUGAL WOULD PLAY IN NATO. WE ACCEPTED HIS DECLARATIONS BUT WERE STILL ENTITLED TO RAISE QUESTIONS. THE SECOND WAS IN SEEING THAT PORTUGAL AS A MEMBER OF THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY HAD A GOVERNMENT THAT WAS FREELY ELECTED BY THE PEOPLE. ON LATTER POINT PM SAID ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD BUT WHAT WEST DID NOT UNDERSTAND WAS THAT ELECTIONS WERE FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO DRAFT CONSTITUTION. "WE ARE STILL LIVING UNDER A FASCIST CONSTITUTION." PROCESS OF INSTALLING A DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE MORE TIME THAN EXPECTED. I SAID I RECOGNIZED IT WOULD TAKE TIME BUT THE IMPORTANT THING WAS TO CONTINUE THE MOMENTUM.

14. COMMENT: DESPITE STRONG WORDS, TONE OF MEETING WAS CORDIAL. PM OPENED BY TELLING BROOKE HE KNEW HIS BACKGROUND AND WAS DELIGHTED HE HERE, CLOSED HIS SESSION WITH ME BY SAYING HE HAD SPOKEN DIRECTLY BUT HOPED WHAT HE SAID WOULD NOT UNDERCUT OUR CUSTOM OF SPEAKING FRANKLY WITH EACH OTHER. HE OBVIOUSLY LOVES A DEBATE AND WAS PLEASED WHEN BROOKE TOLD HIM HE HAD SCORED A POINT BY ARGUING THAT NONE OF THE CONCERN BEING EXPRESSED NOW WAS EVER EXPRESSED WHEN A FASCIST GOVERNMENT WAS IN POWER (I OBJECTED AND POINTED TO ARMS EMBARGO).

15. MOST OF MY NATO COLLEAGUES ARE RELUCTANT TO DEAL WITH VASCO GONCALVES. THEY ARE AFRAID HE WILL BLOW UP. THAT IS A RISK, BUT I THINK IT IS A MISTAKE TO BY-PASS HIM. COSTA GOMES RESPONDS IN A SOFTER VEIN, BUT GENERALLY DOES VERY LITTLE.

VASCO GONCALVES IS TOUGHER TO DEAL WITH BUT IS MORE ACTION ORIENTED. HE PRODUCED RESULTS ON AID PROGRAM AND HE MAY WELL DO SOMETHING ON ANTI-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA. RIGHT NOW HE HAS DIRECT ACCESS TO MORE POWER THAN COSTA GOMES ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT STILL HAS BROADER SUPPORT AMONG BOTH MILITARY AND PUBLIC.

16. MY JUDGEMENT IS THAT VASCO GONCALVES IS PRINCIPALLY INTERESTED IN DOMESTIC CHANGES, THE MOVE TOWARD "SOCIALISM" AND "SOCIAL JUSTICE." HE WANTS TO EXPAND CONTACTS WITH SOVIETS AND THEIR FRIENDS, OPEN TIES WITH THIRD WORLD, AND STILL MAINTAIN NATO CONNECTIONS. AT ONE POINT IN CONVERSATION HE SAID "WHY CAN'T YOU LET US MAKE OUR OWN INTERNAL CHANGES IN PEACE. WE HAVE DONE NOTHING TO ALTER OUR RELATIONS WITH YOU." DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL COSTA GOMES SAID MANY PEOPLE
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BELIEVE WE ARE IN LEAGUE WITH THE LOCAL OLIGARCHY. VASCO GONCALVES MAY BE ONE OF THESE. WE SHOULD BEAR THIS IN MIND IN DEALING WITH HIM.

17. REQUEST DEPARTMENT MAKE APPROPRIATE PORTIONS OF THIS CABLE AVAILABLE TO SENATOR BROOKE.
CARLUCCI

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